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MUSIC IN EDUCATION

By MRS. FRANCES ELLIOTT CLARK,

Vice-President of Pennsylvania Federation of Music Clubs,

Read at General Federation of Women's Clubs,

Hot Springs, Arkansas, May 8, 1918.

It is a great pleasure to greet this great body of women and to speak of the serious side of the study and use of Music.

We so often think of it as a pleasant concomitant of social life, a solace for our sadder hours, or as contributing to the gayer ones, that to some it may appear as wholly incongruous to conceive of it as Education as well as a force *in* Education.

Smarting under the flings and taunts of foreign artists that America was an unusual nation, that we had no culture, it was women everywhere, who first began to organize concert courses in the Churches and clubs, and by prodigious effort supported and made it possible for great orchestras to tour the country, opera companies to give courses in a dozen cities, and literally hundreds of great artists to go into every city with high class concerts all leaving much leavening of real music to feed a starving populace.

The Supervisors of Public School Music, beginning at the bottom of the ladder, have with superhuman patience and a martyr's courage tried to instill into the children's minds and hearts a knowledge of and a love for good music.

We are hearing much of the splendid service of song among our soldiers in cantonment and camp, our song leaders are wonderful and the service rendered by music in keeping up that something we call morale, is truly superb. We had no such work in the Spanish-American War. We are told of the inspiration of the "Hot-Time in the Old Town Tonight" on San Juan Hill, but other than that History is silent. There was no organized leadership and the singing only desultory. Why this great change? Firstly because in these later years the growing youth have been singing the patriotic songs in schools everywhere, and hearing more good music than they ever before dreamed was in the world; and secondly because all this awakened musical interest has given rise to Community Singing.

Six years ago the Supervisors at their meeting in Rochester decided that working through the schools alone was too slow a process to make America musical. They resolved that each Supervisor should attempt to organize the adults in their communities into Singing Societies and Festival Choruses, and there coined the termed "Community Singing." After two or three years the idea caught and everybody began talking and organizing such choruses. Community spirit reached the multitudes and thousands have since experienced the joy of "each for all and all for each" in uplifting song.

When the War's dark cloud enveloped us, our Generals said we must have a singing Army, and so in every cantonment and camp, every organizing center and embarkation point, there is song and singing, pouring out the heart's longings for home and friends and the stirring Patriotic hymns of our own and allied nations. Never since the fall of the walls of Jericho has Music played so important a part in the military affairs of Nations, and never since Apollo called the Muses about him and gave them dominion over all the arts, has Music again been so recognized as a vital force in education and in life.

In this great gathering of women who have come from every part of our country to give and to get inspiration and courage for these dark days which have come upon us, it is altogether fitting that we turn this afternoon to *Music*. God's greatest gift to all His creatures.

Never in our history have we needed it more, and never has it so joyfully responded and given to us all, comfort and consolation.

Poets have rhapsodized on the divine origin, the heavenly beauty, the infinite joy of music, but now it has proven every claim ever made. Music stands

today, acknowledged to be the comfort and solace of heavy hearts, the magic restorer of weary feet, the inspiration of tramping troops, and the last farewell on sinking ships.

The women of America, because of greater numbers, more money and greater co-ordination of effort, are today more efficient, better organized, supporting better the great Army over there, than has ever before been the case. This greatness has come upon American womanhood, not because of superior beauty, charm, apparel, jewels or wealth, but because of greater *service*. "He who would be greatest of all must be servant of all." Music is greatest of all Arts because it is the greatest in *service*. It comes to us as divine when we take it down from its pedestal of remote, distant worship, and take it into our hearts and use it as a part and parcel of our daily life, a part of God with us serving the divine purpose of its ministry.

The angels of Bethlehem sang, not just to sing, but to tell a suffering world of good tidings. The harp of David was used to soothe the troubled mind of his King, the trumpets at Jericho were not for ornament, nor the pipes at Lucknow for extra flourishes. The Marseillaise was not written for personal aggrandizement, but to *serve*. The Battle Hymn of the Republic was a prophetic vision throbbing to the rhythmic beat of a simple tune of lowliest people, but it has served to represent this great Nation in the highest courts of Europe.

The Greeks placed Music correctly when making it the generic term covering all education presided over by the nine Muses, and it only comes fully into its powers when used as *Education* and in *Education*.

The greatest function of the state is education and in education there is no element more vital (reading excepted) than *Music* when we permit it to *serve* in its ancient way, functioning through History, Geography, Physical Culture, Literature, and awakening the keen powers of attention, interest, concentration, selection, contrasting, judgment, and imagination.

We have so long thought of music as a toy of the rich, or the fetish of the genius, or the evil attendant at midnight revels, and as the dream of heavenly bliss, that we are slow to realize that it is just the most universal love in the heart of every child everywhere, the willing Handmaid of religion, and if used wisely, the servant of *Education*, reaching every human soul, and therein lies its true greatness, and appealing worth.

If Music be the universal language it must speak truth and be clear to all who listen. It has a message for every heart in all Christendom, and for every mind if only the mind is trained to interpret the language.

The musical development of the individual is an epitome of the history of the race. As our primitive ancestors first expressed themselves in rhythmic activity with jangles, drums, horns and bells, then in melody with pipe and strings, and finally in harmony with combinations and lastly in story-telling, and musical description and tone coloring for every mood of nature and every emotion of the human heart—so every child must be carried step by step through this same evolution.

He takes himself through the drum and jangler stage with his infantile rattles, and the pipes soon follow with his whistles and horns, and later all the rest in turn.

He should then first hear the melodies of the old Masters, strong in rhythm and played on the near descendant of a primitive instrument. Soon the whole world of tone is at his command; the child, "Heir of all the Ages", if his ears are unstopped, may perceive that "There's Music in the sigh of a reed"; there's Music in the gushing of a rill; there's music in all things if men have ears." O, the pity of it that there should be a soul so dulled that "A primrose by the river's brim, a yellow primrose was to him—and it was nothing more."

It is not worth while to dazzle with generalities; let us see just how Music can *serve* Education. A knowledge of reading, of the great Literature is considered of first importance in education, is it not? Can Music serve here? Let us

see. Scarcely a great poem or great book but may be illustrated and illumined by the Music that is either an integral part of it, or that is related to it by circumstance, environment, nationality, reference or History.

Milton needs the setting of the great Handel and Lawes. Shakespeare is impossible without an intimate knowledge of the music of the Elizabethan period. Utterly flat is the play on words in which Sir Toby and Sir Andrew and the Clown indulge in the side splitting catch "Hold Thy Peace" if one knows not the fashion of a catch or round. Without knowledge about "haut-boys", "Dumps", "Sennets", "sackbut", "Theorbo", "broken music", "consorts", etc., one misses the fine points of many a line, for Shakespeare knew the music of his day and his plays are bubbling over with reference to it.

If one has never seen a May Pole or an English Folk Game nor heard "Sellenger's Round", or "Green-Sleeve's", or "Willow-Willow", how can one possibly understand his Shakespeare? Portia must needs have music to guide her Bassanio in his choice of caskets. Only to sweet music could Lorenzo woo his Jessica.

"Midsummer Night's Dream" is rather far-fetched and unconvincing until we hear Mendelssohn's music, and then we can see the fairies dancing and hear them soothe to slumber Titania, their Queen, and then realize why the grand "Wedding March" has sent so many other happy brides from the altar.

What of History? Can music serve here? Egyptian and Assyrian hieroglyphics show us that music was then a part of life. Chinese music is as old as the race. Music has preserved for all time the history of all races through their scales, rhythms and instruments.

The ancient Hebrews had music in all activities of life, some of it has been preserved. The first expressions of the Christian Era were the songs in the catacombs of Rome. The first work of the early church was in music, and some of Ambrose and more of Pope Gregory are available. The Crusaders marched singing to Jerusalem and the Troubadours recorded their epoch in song. Charlemagne founded the Conservatory of Paris and left at least one hymn which Jeanne D' Arc immortalized. The Netherland School prepared the way and opera was a product of the Renaissance. The subjects of most early operas were historical and are today the best replicas of their time, as William Tell; Tannhauser, the Meistersingers, etc.

In the field of Physical Education Music is indispensable. Games, mimetic play, calisthenics are vitalized by it, while Folk Dancing is impossible without it. In the beginning all songs were danced and all dances were sung. The Folk Dance and the Folk Song were one.

In penmanship the rhythmic accompaniment of Music at once relaxes muscular tension and induces regularity, flexibility, steadiness and speed. The same is true of touch typewriting. The stimulus to the fingers is exactly the same as to the feet in the dance.

What of Geography? Can Music serve here? The people of earth are largely creatures of environment, climate, race and tradition. The life of every people is reflected in their music. The whole history of Russia is in her lullabies, her Cossack songs, her Church Choruses, her songs of the Volga, the steppes, the Siberian Snows.

Sunny Italy is mirrored in her languorous songs of love and beauty. The sturdy Scotch are aggressively and persistently felt in the militant "Scots Wha Hae" and as tender as strong in the beautiful love songs of Bobbie Burns. The pathos, the humor of the whole Scotch race is revealed in them.

Does not three bars of "St. Patrick's Day" or the "Irish Washerwomen" bring to memory the whole Irish nationality, and who but a fiery and dashing *senorita* could do a Bolero or jangle a tambourine? Where but on a tropical island, isolated, dreamy and lazy, could one hear the sliding, slurring, sleepy Ukelele?

(To be concluded.)